

# United States Marshals Service



## FACT SHEET Business Services

In 1984, Congress enacted the Comprehensive Crime Control Act, giving federal prosecutors new forfeiture provisions to combat crimes and creating the Department of Justice Asset Forfeiture Fund. The proceeds from the sale of forfeited cars, real estate, jewelry and other forms of property, as well as tainted cash, are deposited into this fund and reinvested into law enforcement activities.

Prior to the creation of this fund, property management and disposition costs created an economic disincentive to the aggressive use of this important and powerful law enforcement tool. While there are more than 200 federal laws that have forfeiture provisions, most property in the Marshals Service's custody comes from drug trafficking, money laundering, organized crime and fraud cases.

### Asset Forfeiture

In 1985, the Marshals Service assumed the responsibility of managing and disposing properties seized and forfeited by federal law enforcement agencies and U.S. Attorneys nationwide. Monies from the Asset Forfeiture Fund are available to the Marshals Service to pay for costs incurred while maintaining these properties — which include cars, boats, vessels, aircraft, jewelry, fine art, livestock, houses, apartment buildings and restaurants. Since the



program began, the Marshals Service has had over \$7.8 billion in assets in its custody.

All 95 Marshals Service district offices administer seized assets. The Marshals secure custody, inventory, appraise, store and maintain property until the final court order is entered. Much of the work in this program is done by professional companies under contract to the agency. The volume and the complexity of some types of assets require considerable knowledge and skill to be successfully managed.

The Marshals Service provides property services to the Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the Food and Drug Administration.

These federal agencies work with state, local and international law enforcement agencies to investigate seized asset cases.

At the conclusion of forfeiture cases, participating state and local agencies can apply for an equitable share of the proceeds. The Marshals Service has disbursed over \$1.7 billion to domestic law enforcement agencies and foreign governments through equitable sharing.

There are three goals of the Asset Forfeiture Program: law enforcement; law enforcement

cooperation; and revenue to enhance law enforcement. Asset forfeiture is a law enforcement success story and the Marshals Service plays a vital role.

*NOTE: The Marshals Service's National Sellers List is available from the Consumer Information Center at 1-800-688-9889, or on the Internet at <http://www.usdoj.gov/marshals/>. This list is free to the public and contains the same information contained in commercially-marketed publications.*

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